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2. **Tytuł:** *Faith and Reason – territory of constructing freedom in personalisational pedagogics*

3. **Źródło:** red. M. Paracki, „Studia Humanistica Gedanensia” 2012, t. 2, s. 55-57

FAITH AND REASON – TERRITORY OF CONSTRUCTING FREEDOM IN PERSONALISATIONAL PEDAGOGICS¹

For thousands of years various philosophical, theological, psychological, antropological and pedagogical theories on the existence of a human being have been created. All sciences: philosophy, theology and pedagogics have expressed views on this matter. Still, there is the extremely important question of the correlation between faith and reason. When speaking about constructing a person's freedom within a space restricted by two poles; „fides et ratio”, it is necessary to remember that separating faith and reason cannot be done without depriving a person of the possibility of comprehending himself, the world and God. It is not necessary for faith and reason to compete with each other. Both realities overlap, each having its own territory. As St. Anselm of Canterbury said: *credo ut intelligam et intelligo ut credam* (I believe to comprehend and I comprehend to believe).

In Europe, basically two main concepts of the personalisational notion of a human being have sprung up. One, represented by Emmanuel Mounier, called *open personalisation*, is also known as social engagement personalisation. The other one, represented by Jacques Maritain, is called *integral humanism*. It is important to ascertain that a human being is a fleshy-spiritual creature given freedom, moral responsibility, awareness and will. In this respect E. Mounier's statement that

¹ This text was published earlier in a wider form in the following articles: W. Cichosz, *Fides et ratio jako przestrzeń kształtowania wolności w pedagogice personalistycznej*, w: *Wiara i rozum na progu trzeciego tysiąclecia*, red. W. Deptuła i W. Dyk, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego, Szczecin 1999, s. 23-45; *Chrześcijańska koncepcja społeczeństwa personalistycznego w myśli współczesnych dialogików*, w: *Solidarność i społeczeństwo obywatelskie*, red. T. Biedrzycki, Księgarnia św. Jacka, Katowice 2007, s. 139-149; *Chrześcijańskie porządkowanie kultury w świetle wiary i rozumu*, w: *Kultura chrześcijańska w zjednoczonej Europie*, red. T. Sikorski, A. Dymier, Wyd. Centrum Edukacyjnej Archidiecezji Szczecińsko-Kamieńskiej, Szczecin 2007, s. 24-29.

„everyone has to learn the job of a man” becomes significant. J. Maritain continues: „we are human beings but we turn into people”. In order to talk about education and a man in general, it is important first to find the answer to the question: „Who am I?”. Christian personalisational education does not reveal man's relation to material goods since the world of objects is perceived as impersonal, but directly refers to interpersonal relations. Education is assisted by the following hierarchy of values: material, spiritual and absolute. Absolute value in no way refers to freedom as an arbitrary activity or freedom without limits: individualism, egoism, relativism or excessive tolerance. Neither does the value mean intellect and reason, acquiring knowledge about the world and human beings or educational techniques. What it really means is acquiring spiritual, internal freedom by knowledge, wisdom, love and reaching the peaks of external freedom in the process of subordination to all values which ensure the growth of a human being. From a personalisational viewpoint there are always two people who take part in the process of education: a fosterer and a foster child. Education should always concern personal values. Intellectual and absolute freedom are not the most important values but rather the meeting of two people: a master and a pupil, which reveals the range of values due to which a man becomes a man, regardless of his/her beliefs and social system.

In the process of personalisational education it is the master-the fosterer who leads the pupil-a foster child to goodness, truth and beauty. Personalisational Christian view recommends the continual building of the relation: Me-You, You-Me. The fosterer is not only the master leading the pupil but is also an example to follow. The personalisational education needs a dialogue not a monologue. Furthermore, it does not need terror since the person who in an atmosphere of real conversation concentrates on his/her influence as the speaker of what should be said by him. Dynamic growth of a foster child in the personalisational perspective implies a variety and complexity of pedagogical effort towards goodness, beauty and truth in the following hierarchy of values: material, spiritual and absolute.

In the personalisational-dialogic encounter of a pupil with a tutor the rule of the golden mean, presented by Aristotle: *nec temere, nec timide* (neither audaciously nor fearfully) is very important. Analogically, the same holds for education towards

freedom: in faith and wisdom. The tutor-master ought to realise the confidence bestowed upon him by a pupil, his parents and God. When educating generations of youngsters in the atmosphere of a free encounter of individuals, the tutor- master is obliged to prove by himself and by the educating process that faith and reason (*fides et ratio*) are like two wings leading a human spirit towards the contemplation of the truth. A free individual has to verify the mutual relation between faith and reason. Shifting the balance for the benefit of the first one leads to dangerous fideism, fundamentalism and radical traditionalism. Relying solely on reason creates ontologism, scientism and rationalism. Thus, it is necessary to remember that there are two ways of comprehension, different in regard to its principle and its object. To be a truly free man means to realise the fact that although faith is above reason, there can never be a great discrepancy between them. *Fides et ratio* are two poles of comprehension, in which a free individual can experience truth, goodness and beauty.